



City of Kalispell

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May 17, 2002

Surface Transportation Board
Office of the Secretary
Case Control Unit
1925 K Street, NW
Washington, DC 20423

205514

Re: STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 392X)

Gentlemen:

The March 21, 2002 Federal Register included a notice of exemption from the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway Company for the rail line from Kalispell to Ball's Crossing south of Kalispell. I was extremely please to learn there were no protests to the notice and the exemption became effective on April 20.

Although this rail line once provided service to several shippers, these shippers are no longer active and BNSF has not used the line for many years. The line is now of much greater importance as part of the route of the long-planned US 93 Kalispell Truck Bypass. The City of Kalispell, therefore, supports the request by the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) for a public use condition that will provide the time necessary for MDT and BNSF to negotiate the purchase of the right-of-way for use as part of the bypass.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and I look forward to following the progress of this important process.

ENTERED
Office of the Secretary

MAY 31 2002

Part of
Public Record

Sincerely,

Chris A. Kukulski,
City Manager

Copy: David A. Galt, Director, Montana Department of Transportation
Patrick Keim, BNSF
Jerry Johnson, BNSF

RESOLUTION NO. 4665

A RESOLUTION TO DECLARE THE SUPPORT OF THE KALISPELL CITY COUNCIL FOR CONSTRUCTION OF THE HIGHWAY 93 TRANSPORTATION BYPASS AROUND THE CITY OF KALISPELL AS OUTLINED IN THE OCTOBER 1993 KALISPELL BYPASS FEASIBILITY STUDY.

WHEREAS, residential development continues to grow in the outlying areas of Kalispell with an increasing distance between locations of residences and the locations of jobs and commerce, resulting in increasing travel time and distance; and

WHEREAS, overall traffic volumes in Kalispell have grown considerably over the last 20 years; and

WHEREAS, Idaho Street and Main Street traffic volumes exceed 21,000 vehicles per day, resulting in congested traffic conditions throughout the day; and

WHEREAS, traffic increases are projected to continue on U.S. Highway 93. Increasing traffic congestion on Main Street through the downtown area will continue to impede business activity, essential business travel and personal travel both by automobile and for pedestrians and bicyclists; and

WHEREAS, it is the goal of the Council to promote the safe and efficient passage of motor vehicle traffic through the City of Kalispell as well as to maintain a viable and vibrant business and commercial district along Main Street in downtown Kalispell, the soundness of which is disadvantaged by the bisection of the district by four lanes of congested traffic; and

WHEREAS, in October 1993 the City of Kalispell conducted a Bypass Feasibility Study in which it recommended utilizing the railroad corridor from US 93 south to US 2, north of US 2 crossing through the Two Mile and Three Mile Drives area to Stillwater Road, then north along Stillwater Road to either Reserve Drive or a potential new alignment along the power transmission lines to US 93; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Kalispell considers it advisable that they make a formal declaration of support for the construction of a transportation bypass as recommended in its 1993 Feasibility Study; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of Kalispell would like state and federal transportation agencies to seriously consider constructing the bypass in two phases. Phase I would be the construction of the bypass from South US 93 north to US 2, and Phase II would construct north from US 2 and connect to US 93 using Reserve Drive.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KALISPELL, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION I. That the City Council of the City of Kalispell hereby declares its support for the development and construction of the Highway 93 Bypass around downtown Kalispell as recommended by the October 1993 Feasibility Study and emphatically calls for the commencement and progression of this project.

SECTION II. The City Manager is authorized and directed to communicate this resolution to the Montana Department of Transportation, the County of Flathead and to the various representatives in the Montana State Legislature.

PASSED AND APPROVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL AND SIGNED BY THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF KALISPELL, THIS 15TH DAY OF OCTOBER, 2001.

Wm. E. Boharski.

Wm. E. Boharski
Mayor

Attest:

Theresa White
Theresa White
City Clerk